

I claim:

1. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a source computer to control the use of content carried over a content controlled instant message session with a target computer, the source computer having a program for performing the steps of:

determining a requested use attribute for instant message content generated by the source computer;

sending the requested use attribute to the target computer;

receiving an indication verifying whether a content controlled instant message session is supported at the target computer; and

establishing the content controlled instant message session having a session use attribute based upon the requested use attribute with the received indication, the content controlled instant message session controlling the use of content provided over the session at the target computer in accordance with the session use attribute.

2. The computer-readable medium of claim 1 wherein the received indication further includes an indication that a use content feature on the target computer corresponding to the requested use attribute has been activated.

3. The computer-readable medium of claim 2 wherein the use content feature is a disabled printing function, a disabled screen capture function, a disabled third party join function, a disabled clipboard copy function, or a disabled logging function at the target computer.

4. The computer-readable medium of claim 1 wherein the establishing step further comprises the steps:

modifying the requested use attribute;

sending the modified use attribute; and

receiving a confirmation of the modified use attribute from the target computer to establish the content controlled instant message session, the session use attribute based upon the modified use attribute;

5. The computer-readable medium of claim 1 further comprising:

updating the session use attribute during communication over the content controlled instant message session after the establishing of the content controlled instant message session step.

6. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a source computer to control the use of content carried over a content controlled instant message session to a target computer, the target computer having a program for performing the steps of:

receiving a first message containing a first requested use attribute from the source computer;

reading the first requested use attribute;

determining whether a content use feature corresponding to the first requested use attribute is supported on the target computer; and

sending a second message indicating the support of the content use feature to the source computer.

7. The computer-readable medium of claim 6 wherein the program further comprises the step of:

activating the content use feature on the target computer.

8. The computer-readable medium of claim 7 wherein the content use feature is a disabled print function, a disabled screen capture function, a disabled third party join function, a disabled clipboard copy function, or a disabled logging function resident on the target computer.

9. The computer-readable medium of claim 6 wherein the second message includes a first unsupported use attribute, the first unsupported use attribute defining the feature on the target computer which may not be activated.

10. The computer-readable medium of claim 6 wherein the program further comprising the steps of:

determining a second requested use attribute for instant message content generated by the target computer, the second requested use attribute corresponding to a second content use feature;

sending the second requested use attribute to the source computer;

receiving at the source computer an activation indication of the second content use feature; and

sending an instant message having content controlled by the second content use feature.

11. The computer-readable medium of claim 6 further comprising the step of:  
updating the first requested use attribute.

12. The computer-readable medium of claim 10 further comprising the step of:  
updating the second requested use attribute.

13. A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to control  
the use of content over a content controlled instant message session, the computer system having  
a source computer having a source program and a target computer having a target program, the  
target program having access to disabling a content use feature on the target computer, by  
performing the steps of:

sending a requested use attribute for instant message content generated by the source  
program;

receiving the requested use attribute at the target program;

determining whether a content use feature corresponding to the requested use attribute is  
supported;

receiving at the source computer an indication of whether the content use feature is  
supported; and

establishing the content controlled instant message session having a session use attribute  
defining the content use feature.

14. The computer-readable medium of claim 13 further comprising the step of:  
activating the content use feature on the target computer.

15. The computer-readable medium of claim 13 further comprising the following step before the receiving an indication step, the following step comprising:

determining a second requested use attribute to control content sent by the target program.

16. The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein the content use feature is a printing function, a screen capture function, a third party join function, a disabled clipboard copy function, or a logging function resident on the target computer.

17. The computer-readable medium of claim 13 further comprising the following steps before the establishing step, the following steps comprising:

modifying the requested use attribute;  
sending the modified use attribute to the target computer; and  
receiving a confirmation of the modified use attribute from the target computer to establish the content controlled instant message session,  
wherein the session use attribute is based upon the modified use attribute;

18. The computer-readable medium of claim 13 further comprising the following step of:

updating the session use attribute after establishment of the content controlled instant message session.

19. A method for controlling the use of content generated by a source computer over a content controlled instant message session to a target computer, the method comprising the steps of:

determining a requested use attribute for instant message content generated by the source computer;

sending the requested use attribute to the target computer;

receiving an indication verifying whether a content controlled instant message session is supported at the target computer; and

establishing the content controlled instant message session having a session use attribute based upon the requested use attribute with the received indication, the content controlled instant message session controlling the use of content provided over the session at the target computer in accordance with the session use attribute.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the indication further includes an indication that a use content feature on the target computer corresponding to the requested use attribute has been activated.

21. The method of claim 19 wherein the use content feature is a disabled printing function, a disabled screen capture function, a disabled third party join function, a disabled clipboard copy function, or a disabled logging function at the target computer.

22. The method of claim 19 wherein the establishing step further comprises the steps of:

modifying the requested use attribute;  
sending the modified use attribute; and  
receiving a confirmation of the modified use attribute from the target computer to establish the content controlled instant message session, the session use attribute based upon the modified use attribute.

23. The method of claim 19 further comprising:  
updating the session use attribute during communication over the content controlled instant message session after the establishing of the content controlled instant message session step.

24. A method for controlling the use of content generated by a source computer and transmitted over a content controlled instant message session to a target computer, the method at the target computer comprising the steps of:

receiving a first message containing a requested use attribute from the source computer;  
reading the requested use attribute;  
determining whether a content use feature corresponding to the requested use attribute is supported on the target computer; and  
sending a second message indicating the support of the content use feature to the source computer.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the program further comprises the step of:  
activating the content use feature on the target computer.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the content use feature is a disabled print function, a disabled screen capture function, a disabled third party join function, a disabled clipboard copy function, or a disabled logging function resident on the target computer.

27. The method of claim 24 wherein the second message includes a first unsupported use attribute, the first unsupported use attribute defining the feature on the target computer which may not be activated.

28. The method of claim 24 wherein the program further comprising the step of:  
determining a second requested use attribute for instant message content generated by the target computer, the second requested use attribute corresponding to a second content use feature;  
sending the second requested use attribute to the source computer;  
receiving at the source computer an activation indication of the second content use feature; and  
sending an instant message having content controlled by the second content use feature.

29. The method of claim 24 further comprising the step of:  
updating the first requested use attribute.

30. The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of:  
updating the second requested use attribute.